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Thursday, 24 February 2000, 11.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Listre	(Argentina)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Kasse
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2000/30)

00-31329 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2000/30)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Portugal in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Monteiro (Portugal) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, contained in document S/2000/30.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2000/143, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: S/2000/67 and S/2000/122, letters dated 28 January and 11 February 2000, respectively, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo; S/2000/73 and S/2000/89, letters dated 26 January and 3 February 2000, respectively, from Uganda; and S/2000/81, note verbale dated 31 January 2000 from South Africa.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): At the outset, we feel it is absolutely fair and necessary to commend the United States delegation for the great efforts they have made in coordinating the draft resolution before us.

Exactly one month ago my delegation expressed its optimism that the "week of the Democratic Republic of Congo" within the "month of Africa" in the Security Council would produce very concrete results contributing to the restoration of peace and security in the Central African region. Shortly, the Security Council will make a bold step toward meeting the long-held expectations of African countries and of the whole international community. There is every reason to consider the resolution of the Security Council to initiate the second phase of the United Nations presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as the first momentous decision of this organ in the new century.

In this connection, it is essential to recognize that our decision will confer a heavy responsibility on all those concerned. Both the restoration of peace in the region and the credibility of the United Nations in conflict resolution in the years to come will be at stake after the deployment of the expanded United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Yesterday at their summit in Lusaka the parties reaffirmed their strong commitment to the Ceasefire Agreement and reiterated their determination for its full and expeditious implementation. We expect strict adherence to that commitment, which is the most fundamental prerequisite for ensuring the success of the collective endeavor to bring peace and stability to the Great Lakes region.

Clearly, the MONUC expansion represents the core of the draft resolution before the Council. At the same time, Ukraine attaches particular significance to the fact that this decision is accompanied by the explicit reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The emphasis on the obligation of all States to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, is more than relevant in respect to the situation which on 24

January 2000 was described by the President of the Security Council as Africa's first world war.

Ukraine supports the current draft resolution and will consider making a substantive contribution to assist in its implementation.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): The Secretary-General first recommended the deployment of the 500 military observers in his report of 1 November 1999, and we thank him very much for that report. It has taken the Security Council almost 4 months to agree in this draft resolution on the deployment of the 500 observers, not to mention the various conditions attached to said deployment. My delegation hopes this is testimony of the importance that the Security Council and all of us gathered here today attach to resolving that conflict.

It is indeed encouraging to know that work on the national dialogue envisaged in the Ceasefire Agreement has commenced. We welcome the discussions held between the facilitator of the national dialogue and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and other political leaders in the country. We would once again like to call for assistance with the facilitation process. We have no doubt that the Congolese people will find common ground to resolve their problems, without interference, and in that way pave the way for the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces.

We hope that the adoption of the draft resolution, which is long overdue, will result in the speedy deployment of personnel of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the same vein, it is our sincere hope that all parties will cooperate fully with MONUC to enable its personnel to carry out its mandate. In this regard, we are encouraged by the joint communiqué adopted at the Lusaka summit yesterday. On our part, Namibia pledges its full-continued support and cooperation.

The draft resolution before us is not perfect; it is a compromise draft. It is for this reason that I would like to remind us all about the real cause of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the need for all States to refrain from interference in each other's internal affairs. This is a Charter obligation, which is emphasized in the Lusaka Agreement and accepted by all parties.

The situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo is of particular and serious concern to us. We should not turn our backs on the innocent Congolese people in the eastern part of the country who are subjected to continuous human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations. The perpetrators of these heinous crimes should bear responsibility for their actions. Indeed, the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo should not pay for the inaction of the international community with regard to past violations of international humanitarian law in other parts of that region.

In addition, the illegal exploitation of the natural resources and other natural wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the eastern part of the country should cease. These illegal actions not only violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, but fuel the continuation of hostilities. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report in this regard.

Our view remains that the number of 5,537 military personnel being authorized by the draft resolution is inadequate to monitor implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement over the vast territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In other words, it does not conform to the mandate of MONUC as set out in the resolution we are about to adopt. Nevertheless, we will go along with the proposed numbers, with the hope that the Secretary-General will revert to the Council should additional personnel be required.

The deployment of the 5,537 MONUC personnel is only the second phase in a series of deployments. It therefore goes without saying, and it is only logical, that the Secretary-General will no doubt be preparing for the next phase of United Nations deployment in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We therefore hope that the Secretary-General will come back to the Council with recommendations in that regard as well. Furthermore, we cannot overemphasize the need for MONUC to protect civilians under threat of violence within its capabilities.

Over the years, the United Nations has brought peace to so many countries, including my own. The expectations of the suffering masses of the Democratic Republic of Congo for peace in their country are therefore high, and rightly so. We should not let them down.

Finally, Mr. President, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): A month ago the Security Council, on the initiative of its

President, the representative of the United States, received the heads of State of the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those heads of State reiterated their commitment to the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. The Secretary-General presented his recommendations on the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for which my delegation has been calling for some months. The Secretary-General recommended the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement in its entirety: respect for the ceasefire, disengagement of the parties, disarmament of armed groups, and withdrawal of all foreign forces. His recommendations also included the future, convening of an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region.

At that special meeting of the Security Council, the French Minister Delegate for Cooperation and Francophonie, Mr. Josselin, observed that, by supporting United Nations intervention, the Security Council should consolidate respect for the ceasefire. He welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendations to that end, with the proviso that security matters should be addressed in all their aspects.

The draft resolution before the Council today is intended to implement the recommendations of the Secretary-General. It clearly sets out the conditions on which the deployment of an expanded MONUC must be based: respect for the ceasefire, formulation of a plan for the disengagement of forces, and guarantees by the parties to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel. The draft resolution is not perfect; it is a compromise text, as the Permanent Representative of Namibia has rightly noted. We might wonder in particular about the optimal number of observers and of the military personnel who will support them. But, as the representative of Namibia also observed, the text clearly sets out, for anyone willing to read it carefully and to understand it, what was at the origin of the deterioration of the situation: it clearly indicates where the responsibility lies. For that reason, the French delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

The draft resolution can be implemented only if concrete steps are taken by the parties to the conflict. In that connection, we welcome yesterday's Lusaka meeting of the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement; that was a positive sign, but it is necessary to go beyond what remain declarations of intent — even if signatures have been affixed to them.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is indeed a matter for concern, particularly in the eastern part of the country, where heightened tension has been noted. The most recent information on developments in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which we received late yesterday from the Secretariat, indicates that the presence of foreign forces is increasingly resented and has quite naturally led to resistance among the population. The information supplied by the Secretariat indicates also that massacres and inter-ethnic confrontation have occurred, raising the spectre of a new escalation of violence.

We cannot fail to be concerned at the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in violation of that country's sovereignty. As the draft resolution clearly states, such activities contribute to the continuation of hostilities.

Hence, all parties must make a major effort to implement the Ceasefire Agreement.

In supporting the deployment of MONUC, it is our hope that it will help bring about a true implementation of the Agreement. It ought also to contribute to reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that national dialogue, with the help of the facilitator, President Masire, will make such a reconciliation possible. Beyond that hope, and beyond its moral and political support, France is prepared to respond to the appeal addressed to all Council members by the President in January by providing material support to the facilitator.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): The adoption of the draft resolution on which we will vote today is a critical step forward in the Council's consideration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is a clear demonstration of the Council's readiness to build on the momentum of January's open meeting. And in practical terms, it creates a framework for the United Nations and the international community to take a substantive role in resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Now we must press on and get results. The United Kingdom wants to see the Secretariat move ahead as rapidly as possible to deploy the expanded United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the

Congo (MONUC) which we will authorize today. But as the draft resolution spells out, that deployment can proceed only in parallel with implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Even after the momentum generated by Ambassador Holbrooke's initiative in January and by the commitments then made in this Chamber by regional leaders, the situation on the ground does not look promising.

The fighting must stop now. International humanitarian law must be respected. We are in particular extremely concerned about the situation in the Kivus, to which the representative of France just referred. There is a risk of a humanitarian catastrophe. The increasing ethnic tension there threatens the entire population. This is a stark reminder of why the Lusaka Agreement has to be made to work, and why effective disarmament, demobilization resettlement and reintegration are crucial to future peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region. It is essential that all the Lusaka parties take action now to defuse the situation in the Kivus. The rearming and resupply of armed groups and ethnic propaganda must stop now. And the United Nations must be granted access to deploy in the region.

The United Kingdom also believes that it is imperative to move forward on all the political as well as the military elements of Lusaka. It is vital that an open, inclusive and democratic national dialogue on the future of the Congo get under way as soon as possible. And a programme for the comprehensive, voluntary and peaceful disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of armed groups — without which the Lusaka Agreement cannot succeed — must be elaborated and agreed. Clearly, synergy between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in all these areas is vital.

The parties must also cooperate with MONUC. Access and security must be provided for the United Nations mission and for aid agencies. The parties must ensure that the right conditions are in place for MONUC's deployment to the four designated sites. We are most concerned that access has not yet been granted to MONUC to conduct reconnaissance and survey activities in the proposed deployment sites. This is unacceptable. We strongly endorse the elements in the draft resolution that make it clear that deployment must go forward only when the Secretary-General is satisfied that the conditions are right, and that he should keep the Council fully informed of progress in this area.

Finally, we welcome the recognition in the draft resolution of the need to address profiteering from and exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the links between such activities and the continuation of the conflict. We must also look urgently at ways of strengthening existing relevant United Nations arms embargoes, as well as other means to curtail the supply of arms to the region.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): One month ago we met here with the heads of State of the African countries concerned to explore together ways of resolving the question of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There was then a unanimous call for the United Nations to dispatch a peacekeeping operation to that country as soon as possible in order to promote effectively the resolution of the conflict there.

Today the draft resolution on the deployment of military observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be voted upon in a demonstration of the readiness and determination of the international community, including the Security Council, to help resolve the question of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are gratified that a consensus has finally been reached on the draft resolution.

The question of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is complex and sensitive. We have long held the position that respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and effective implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement form the basis for resolving the question. The current phase II deployment of the United Nations operation is intended only to assist in carrying out part of the Lusaka Agreement. More and harder tasks are before the international community and the parties to the conflict, and call for their common efforts.

Therefore advance thought should be given to further United Nations peacekeeping tasks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It goes without saying that it will not be possible to carry out these tasks in the absence of strict adherence to the Lusaka Agreement by the parties to the conflict and without the successful deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

We welcome the outcome of the recently concluded Lusaka summit, particularly the reaffirmation of the commitment of the parties to the conflict to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and their readiness to provide firm security guarantees to United Nations personnel.

The success of the peacekeeping operation hinges on close cooperation between the parties and the United Nations mission in question. Therefore it is essential that the parties to the conflict provide assistance to and facilitate MONUC in its work. At the same time, MONUC, in carrying out its work, should pay attention to enhancing communication with the parties — particularly with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo — and should heed, as well as respect, their views. It is our hope and expectation that the establishment of the joint structure of MONUC and the Joint Military Commission will have the salubrious effect of enhancing coordination and cooperation between the two.

The Chinese delegation supports the expansion of MONUC and is in favour of the draft resolution that is to be voted on. We hope that under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Morjane, MONUC will successfully accomplish its mission and lay the groundwork for future United Nations peacekeeping activities in the region.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): The draft resolution before us today is a pivotal one, which can have lasting impact on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region of Africa as a whole. Our deliberations during January, which culminated in the historic participation in the Council's meeting on 24 January by seven heads of State or Government, emphasized only too well that there are intractable problems in the region, problems that need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

At that time my delegation expressed its support for the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2000/30. It is in this context that the Jamaican delegation believes that the adoption of this draft resolution will be a step in the right direction. We believe that while the draft resolution by no means meets all of our wishes, it will send a positive signal to the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and to the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that the Security Council is committed to playing its part in reinvigorating the peace process in that country.

We welcome the political will demonstrated by the parties to the Lusaka Agreement, most recently at their summit on 23 February. We are sure that they will continue to demonstrate their determination to strictly adhere to the Agreement and to implement it in all its aspects.

We appreciate the fact that the draft resolution fosters the objective of national reconciliation while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours. However, my delegation must express its deep concern at reports of recent outbreaks of fighting and of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. We must also express our alarm at the deteriorating humanitarian situation and emphasize that those responsible for the violations of international humanitarian law must be brought to justice.

Jamaica supports the expansion of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as proposed in the draft resolution, as a minimum. We hope that this will lead to the eventual deployment of a peacekeeping mission. We wish to emphasize that all parties must provide credible security guarantees to enable MONUC to fulfil its mandate and to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches the civilian population throughout the country, to alleviate their unnecessary suffering.

My delegation is also deeply concerned at the reports of the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These activities, as has been clearly shown, have serious consequences for the security conditions and the continuation of hostilities in that country. The international community must also stem the flow of illegal arms into the areas of conflict, as this is further exacerbating the situation.

The coordination of the activities of MONUC and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) is a functional one to which we fully subscribe. Given the crucial role assigned to the JMC in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, it must be provided with the resources to support its operation.

My delegation wishes to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to the staff, both military and civilian, of MONUC, and we wish to express our support for their efforts in seeking to bring peace to this troubled region.

Finally, it is our hope that this draft resolution, which my delegation will support, will underline the commitment of the international community to support an end to the years of conflict and to provide a basis on which sustainable peace can take root in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada will support the draft resolution creating phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). This decision follows a thorough debate involving the most senior levels of my Government. It was a debate about the imperatives of common security, about Canada's long-standing commitment to Africa and to peacekeeping and about our determination to learn the lessons of the past.

We will vote in favour of this draft resolution because the Africans themselves want it and because it will do some good in the context of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our hesitation — and we did hesitate — came as a result of our belief that it could have been done better.

Our main concern about this draft resolution, expressed repeatedly during the negotiations leading to its final form, is that the draft resolution does not match the Mission's mandate with the resources needed to guarantee its success. None of us wants to risk repeating the mistakes made in Srebrenica, this time with an observer mission.

(*spoke in English*)

A proper match between mandate and resources is an operational necessity. Canada has argued that we must learn from our experiences and reflect these lessons in the decisions we take today. I believe the Council did so in Sierra Leone, where we achieved a mandate that today is more closely matched by adequate resources. Though imperfect, the situation in Sierra Leone has stabilized somewhat. The killing has largely stopped.

Canada tried to apply these lessons in our efforts to shape the resolution before us. We understand it is important to get phase II of MONUC off the ground quickly, and that phase II must be in place before phase III can begin. We believe, however, that it is equally important to get phase II right. We do not believe that the number 5,537 is magical, or that the mandate is sufficient. We would have liked to see a more capable observation mission. We would have also preferred to see greater extraction capability even if it took more personnel. For Canada's part, my Government will undertake its own assessment of the conditions on the ground prior to finalizing a contribution to the Mission.

There is a human security disaster unfolding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which requires immediate attention. The Lusaka Agreement requires substantive support from the United Nations. There are few places in the world where civilians are more in need of protection than in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In situations as grave as this, there is an imperative to act and to do what is possible to relieve the suffering of the beleaguered people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is never easy to balance the requirements of immediate response with the sober consideration of longer-term consequences. Unfortunately, such considerations were not the only ones driving the decision on MONUC's force level. Other factors, such as cost aversion and outside political realities, also influenced the Council's decision-making in this instance.

Canada will continue to do everything possible to ensure that United Nations peacekeeping missions have a fair chance to do their job by resisting efforts to force configurations on them that may be politically convenient but operationally unsound. Canada's support today is given in the hope that this phase of MONUC will pave the way to a third phase of substantial United Nations peacekeeping in the service of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Canada will continue to press for such a commitment during our time on the Council and after we leave. Our deep commitment to peace in Africa and to human security demands nothing less.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): In a few minutes the Security Council is going to adopt a landmark draft resolution. We are happy that the Council will be able to authorize the second phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) today. The United Nations Mission is expanded both in size and in mandate. We have succeeded in the exercise within a reasonable period of time — less than one month following the reiteration of commitment by the heads of State involved in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in this very Council Chamber.

By today's action, the Security Council will have play its role in assuming its primary responsibility in the maintenance of peace and security. With this timely decision, the United Nations will be establishing its

authority and keeping its commitment to support the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.

The adoption of the draft resolution is timely also because it follows the much awaited Lusaka summit, which concluded yesterday, where the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Ceasefire Agreement and approved the revised, updated calendar for implementation.

The next challenges will be on the ground. The whole world will now be looking at the region, at the theatre of operations, at the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other actors. The onus will be on the parties: they will have to demonstrate their commitment by action. We appeal to the parties to exercise the utmost restraint, to ensure respect for Ceasefire provisions, to facilitate the deployment of MONUC and its effective operations — in short, to extend full cooperation for the timely implementation of this draft resolution. We encourage the Congolese people in their national dialogue towards a national reconciliation. We urge them to extend full support and cooperation to Sir Ketumile Masire, the facilitator. His task is of paramount importance for all of us.

While exhorting the Lusaka parties to engage themselves in the implementation of peace, we do not forget our own responsibility. For us, the United Nations, it will be critically important to ensure a rapid deployment of the expanded MONUC and mobilization of necessary resources. We must not fail in these challenges ahead of us. The United Nations cannot afford to fail in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Further expansion of the United Nations engagement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as the Secretary-General stated in his report, will depend on the cooperation of the parties, on the situation on the ground. For this we count on the wisdom of the leaders of Africa, particularly of the parties involved in the region.

Finally, let me convey our rich tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke for the leadership role he played in this matter, for his commitment and for his tireless efforts. We also commend the drive and tenacity of Ambassador Soderberg in having the draft resolution so quickly finalized for action by the Council.

To you, Mr. President, we owe a great deal for successfully leading our discussion under very trying conditions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation supports activating the role of the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in accordance with the draft resolution to be adopted today is designed to assist in settling the largest conflict of modern-day Africa, in which many of the States of the continent have become involved.

We are convinced that if the parties render the necessary assistance to MONUC in implementing its mandate, the Mission will make a significant contribution to achieving peace in that country.

By the same token, we realize the complexity of the nexus of the varied interests that are today intertwined in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We fully stand behind those who warn against excessive expectations for the deployment of the peacekeeping operation in that country. The situation is so complicated that it would be not only naive but also dangerous to rely on its settlement by external forces, even if those forces are United Nations forces.

In that context, the Russian Federation underscores the general understanding reached in the Security Council that MONUC will not take measures to force the parties to peace, nor to force the disarmament of irregular armed groups in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, either in this phase or in subsequent phases of the operation.

All my colleagues who have spoken before me have underscored that the main responsibility for achieving a settlement falls to the parties that have affixed their signatures to the Lusaka Agreement. It is precisely their readiness to fulfil in good faith the obligations they assumed — especially as regards compliance with the ceasefire — that will determine how the international community will in the future decide to act to promote the settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In that connection, it is promising that at the Lusaka summit that took place yesterday the parties to the Lusaka Agreement confirmed their resolve to ensure the complete and early implementation of the Agreement. It is important to make this a reality as soon as possible.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): The Netherlands will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. It is an important next step in the phased deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). This draft resolution turns MONUC into a genuine observer mission.

The undertaking that the United Nations is now embarking upon is a gigantic one, but, as is borne out by the draft resolution, it also has its clear limitations. We must remind the parties that the responsibility for the success of the Lusaka Agreement lies first and foremost with them. They are responsible for further progress. When, at a later stage, the Council starts its deliberations about phase III, progress made by the parties will undoubtedly determine the direction of our discussions.

Now and in the future, the Netherlands favours a balanced approach to all issues surrounding the Congo conflict. Such a balanced approach requires, among other things, that throughout the peace process the legitimate security concerns of all neighbouring States be taken seriously. It also means that the human rights situation in the entire territory will be the focus of our attention, as set out in the eighteenth preambular paragraph and in operative paragraph 14.

A balanced approach also means not shying away from the difficult root causes. We welcome the fact that the draft resolution before us addresses the issue of arms flows in the region, as well as the exploitation of natural resources as an incentive to keep the conflict going. The Council expresses its intention to return to both these interrelated issues at a later stage. On the issue of natural resources, we look forward to the report of the Secretary-General referred to in operative paragraph 17. My delegation will be actively considering ways in which these interrelated issues can be tackled in the future so that the rich natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will fuel peace and reconstruction, not war. We would favour the establishment of a panel of experts to investigate these matters, again, in a balanced manner.

As we stated before, one of the key elements in this process is the effective functioning of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and its structures in close coordination with MONUC. The JMC must be turned into a permanent structure for it to be able effectively to address issues that arise. We understand that this matter was taken up during the summit of the States parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement held on 23 February. We look forward to further elaboration of this matter.

The Netherlands contribution for the JMC, in the amount of $250,000, was received by the Organization of African Unity by the end of last year. Other donors have since followed suit. Clearly, the international community is putting its money where its mouth is. Now that money should no longer be the problem, it is up to the parties to make the JMC work.

Finally, the Netherlands subscribes to the statement that will later be made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Tunisia would first of all like to express to you, Mr. President, its appreciation, for all the efforts you have made throughout the consideration of the draft resolution now before us.

I also must express my delegation's appreciation to the delegation of the United States for the valuable contribution it made, along with all the other members of the Council, in the drafting of a text that has our support and in favour of which my delegation will vote.

The draft resolution to be adopted by the Security Council is the result of several weeks of consultations involving the members of the Council, the parties to the Lusaka Agreement, the United Nations Secretariat and other concerned parties. Through this draft resolution, the Security Council authorizes the long-awaited deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and defines its mandate. The Council thereby expresses its commitment to the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, which the parties themselves reaffirmed at the highest level during the meeting of the Security Council on the subject of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, more recently, at the summit held in Lusaka.

This draft resolution in effect responds to the expectations of the Congolese people and, by extension, to the expectations of all the countries of the region and of the African continent, whose only aspirations are peace, security and stability so that they can tackle the

task of development. The success of the operation clearly depends on the following elements.

The first element is the clarity of MONUC's mandate. The Security Council and the Secretariat have attached the greatest importance to this matter in defining the tasks and objective considerations for the deployment of an expanded Mission.

Secondly, aside from the political support it needs, the success of the operation is also a matter of finding the human, material and financial resources the Mission will require. This support and those resources are important and call for goodwill on the part of everyone. Commitments have been made by numerous parties, and we hope those commitments will be fulfilled. My country has already indicated its readiness to contribute.

The third element has to do with the cooperation of all parties. We attach paramount importance to this factor, and we consider that the extent of cooperation afforded by the parties to MONUC will be a test of their genuine commitment to respecting the Lusaka Agreement.

The adoption of this draft resolution coincides with yesterday's meeting of the heads of State signatories to the Lusaka Agreement, who on that occasion reaffirmed their resolute commitment to the Agreement and reiterated their determination to forge ahead in the implementation of its various provisions. In this connection, there is reason to reaffirm that the success of the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement depends first and foremost on the genuine willingness of the parties themselves.

Although it is not perfect, this draft resolution encompasses a host of important areas covered by the Lusaka Agreement as well as practical measures for implementation under reasonable conditions, due account having been taken as to how delicate the situation on the ground is.

We hope that this second phase of MONUC's deployment will take place under positive conditions, although we are aware that the bet has not yet been won and that additional and sustained efforts will continue to be necessary in order to allow the launching of phase III on a solid foundation.

In this context, the convening in due course of an international conference on the Great Lakes region, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, is of great importance. Only then can we entertain any real hope of seeing the entire subregion enjoy the dividends of peace, security and stability — the corollaries of development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Kasse (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Mali will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Security Council concerning the deployment of the second phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The draft resolution expresses the commitment of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mali welcomes the decision to deploy the second phase of MONUC. The deployment will consolidate the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and serve to prepare the third phase of MONUC. We hope that the latter deployment will be larger and more appropriate to the nature of the terrain and have a more robust and broadly expanded mandate. The task before us is herculean. With this draft resolution, our Organization will certainly make its contribution to that effort. Mali encourages all the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to honour their commitments and to cooperate closely with MONUC in the implementation of the draft resolution.

The international community is listening to us. The civilian populations of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the entire region are watching and awaiting us.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2000/143) before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, China, France, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1291 (2000).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): Thank you, Sir, for the extraordinarily effective way you have presided over the Security Council. You said at the end of January that you would work with the United States, which had the honour of being in the presidency last month, in a seamless transition. We pledged to our friends who are concerned with the Congo that the resolution, which many of them had hoped would be adopted in January, would be adopted under the Argentine presidency. You have fulfilled your commitment and we are proud to be associated with you and with our immediate predecessor, the United Kingdom, in what has amounted to not a month of Africa, but three consecutive months of Africa, with much more to come.

I also thank Ambassador Chowdhury for his very generous comments about our efforts and join him in praising my deputy, Nancy Soderberg, for her round-the-clock efforts here while I have spent much of the month, including this morning — and I apologize for being late — on the phone to members of Congress who I feel still needed to be persuaded more fully of the necessity of what we are undertaking. I want to be clear that the American vote here in the United Nations is the exclusive province of the executive branch and we do not need Congress's approval for it. But we do need its approval on the funding and that is why I have been, unfortunately, less of a physical presence with you, Sir, than I wished to. With Nancy as my deputy, however, I do not feel any concern.

Thirty days ago in this Chamber, we convened a historic summit to galvanize international action for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Seven African presidents sat with us at this historic horseshoe and other leaders joined us to discuss the urgent need for action. The time has now arrived to act.

The second phase of the Lusaka peace process begins — perhaps today, with this important vote; perhaps yesterday, in Lusaka — but, in any case, let the record show that it has begun. Today, with this resolution, the Security Council has taken a critical step towards helping the Congo and the region come to the peace that their people so desperately need.

My Government's introducing of this Security Council resolution, its unanimous support and approval today have been made possible by the commitments made in Lusaka and reaffirmed in New York by the heads of the States parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. It is not conceivable to me that we would have been able to adopt such an important and strong resolution if we had not been joined in New York by the presidents of the Lusaka process, by President Chissano of Mozambique, by the representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), by the Secretary General of the OAU and by the facilitator, former President Masire.

The results reached in Maputo, Harare, here in New York and elsewhere have helped move this process along. At the same time, however, the United States remains deeply concerned by reports of resumed military offensives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Security Council and the Secretary-General have made clear, in one of the most important sections of this resolution, that deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping observer mission in phase II — the 5,537 — is contingent on the cooperation of the parties, their commitment in firm and credible assurances to the Secretary-General that they will assist full access, and their adherence to the Lusaka process.

We call on all parties to realize the opportunity for peace provided by the Lusaka Agreement. We strongly endorse Lusaka as the best and only viable process leading to a durable resolution of the Congo conflict. It is more, much more than a ceasefire; it is a blueprint for peace, democratization and lasting reconciliation. The full and unambiguous commitment of the parties to Lusaka is essential in order for the international community to continue to support the peace process.

The crisis in the region has been described as Africa's first world war. As President Clinton reminded us last week in a speech before the historic national summit on Africa held in Washington, we must remember that the central lesson of the First World War is the need for strong, stable peace backed up by institutions that enforce it. That is why the parties must do all they can to see that Lusaka works and why we, the Security Council and the nations Members of the United Nations, must support the process.

One necessary element is to ensure that a joint structure for the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is

established in accordance with today's resolution. This represents extensive work on behalf of all the parties and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to devise an effective organizational structure to ensure the coordination of the two, and more than coordination — the co-location and integration of certain parts of their processes. This is essential to the success of both the JMC and MONUC. Formalizing this co-located structure and making it effective is essential as well to the personal physical safety of the United Nations, OAU and JMC personnel, to reducing duplication of effort, to improving communications and to economizing on resources which will be scarce. Getting the JMC-MONUC connection right — and we all had agreed in our discussions here in December under the British presidency that it was not right at that time — is critical to successful peacekeeping.

It is very important that yesterday's summit in Lusaka endorsed the principle of the joint structure for the MONUC-JMC. The United States is fully committed to the JMC's continued role in bringing the parties to the Lusaka Agreement together with the United Nations in a joint effort to implement the ceasefire. As a means of strengthening the JMC, we are ready to provide full United Nations support for the joint logistics and administrative structures of the co-located JMC-MONUC headquarters.

In this regard, I am very deeply impressed by the fact, and I hope the world's media will report this, that already every member of the Security Council has either made a commitment to the effort — small and symbolic in some cases, but symbolism is important — or has said that it is open to the possibility. Several major contributions have been announced today and recently, and I am delighted that other members of the Security Council have told us today that they will make commitments of amounts to be determined or that they are now seriously looking at doing so.

Sir, if the Security Council could under your presidency be able to state that all 15 members had made a contribution, even if it is small, to this Mission, that would be a first in the history of the United Nations and would set exactly the right tone for future efforts. I am very pleased, Mr. President, that we have made so much progress in that direction under your strong leadership.

Another key element for lasting peace in the Congo remains the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement of the irregular armed forces and armed groups identified in the Lusaka Agreement, including the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces, the Rwandan Interahamwe militia and the Angolan UNITA rebels. A comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement process that maximizes voluntary and peaceful options and commands the full commitment of the Lusaka signatories and the full support of the international community is central to the ultimate success of the Lusaka peace process.

The region has an important and central role to play in this respect. At the same time, the international community should make all means available to support and make secure the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement effort, as well as provide any assistance necessary to the JMC and MONUC as they produce an action plan for effective and complete disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement.

In the days ahead, all States must increase their efforts to uphold and enforce international law against genocide. All those recruiting or providing support or sanctuary to those forces should immediately cease that support, and all States should uphold the Security Council resolutions — this one and previous ones — imposing arms embargoes against the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces, the Interahamwe and UNITA, and to provide information to the Council about re-supply of other armed groups. We believe the Security Council should now consider additional ways to enforce the existing sanctions.

These steps will help the parties control and terminate the widest conflict in the history of modern Africa. But we recognize that however important, this resolution is only an interim step towards a full and lasting peace in the Congo. The United States support for establishing the phase II United Nations observer mission at this time does not constitute prior approval for any future deployment. If the United Nations, after developing plans for proceeding to the next phase of peacekeeping, as called for in this resolution, recommends establishment of a larger United Nations peacekeeping mission, the United States will certainly consider such recommendations on their merits, based on the achievements and the situation in phase II. I want to stress that, because so many people wanted an open-ended commitment to phase III. I think that the Security Council has acted wisely in saying that each phase should be taken based on the prevailing situation at the end of each phase.

Phase III implementation operations should not begin until the parties have accomplished specific military

and political objectives. These include full observance of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, initiation of disengagement and redeployment, and substantial progress in the national dialogue. Here I would like to report that our Ambassador in Kinshasa, Ambassador Swing, has reported to Washington his deep respect and admiration for the way in which former President Masire conducted his colloquy and his dialogue last week in Kinshasa. He has given us a detailed report, and I am sure that many here have received similar reports. We would be happy to share our information with any members outside this Chamber.

I would like to state that Ambassador Swing, whom most members know — he is our most seasoned veteran diplomat serving in the world today — has told us that he thought that President Masire's initial actions in Kinshasa — his meeting with President Kabila and his meeting with other groups — was, and I quote Ambassador Swing, "wise and effective and actually puts President Masire somewhat ahead of the timetable". I am sharing that with the Council because we always focus on the problems, and this sounded to me like a little bit of good news to offer people.

Over the past few months, many have spoken eloquently about the Congo and what the United Nations should do to help. Today we must begin to match the words with deeds. The opportunity beckons for restoring international cooperation in Central Africa. Any effort towards peace will not be easy. Perhaps no African nation has had a harder time coming out of the shadow of its past, from the darkness and horror with which it was brought into the modern world, through a series of leaders, going back over the last century and a half, whose performance will not look very satisfactory before the verdicts of history.

This opportunity must be seized by all of us, and especially by the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement. We cannot promise the people of the Congo immediate peace. We can, however, say that without strong United Nations and OAU leadership, there is a high probability — in fact, a virtual certainty — of a catastrophic disaster in Central Africa.

Today we in the Security Council have taken a critical step to establish the architecture for peace. I hope that history will record it as a major step away from the brink of the abyss. But as the resolution states, implementation depends first and foremost on the parties. After today's vote, we now need the full engagement of the international community to encourage that implementation, the actions of the parties in the region, and efforts through every available channel to bring peace to the Congo.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Argentina.

The resolution we have just adopted represents an important step forward towards the consolidation of the peace process initiated in Lusaka in July 1999. As we have said on earlier occasions, we do not believe that there will be a lasting solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo if the following fundamental elements are not taken into consideration.

These elements include, first of all, full respect for the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the principle of non-intervention in its internal affairs, and the withdrawal of all of the foreign forces that are currently in that territory without the express consent of its Government, as well as recognition of the legitimate security concerns of the countries neighbouring the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the need to create a solid system of security guarantees for all of the countries in the Great lakes region of Africa.

We trust that the deployment of the 500 military observers provided for in the resolution will contribute to consolidating the ceasefire. The success of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) will depend, however, on the degree of cooperation it will enjoy from the parties and their spirit of reconciliation and pacification.

We reaffirm the importance that we attach to the provision of firm and credible assurances for the security and freedom of movement of the staff of MONUC, as set out in the thirteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5 of the resolution. We feel that operative paragraph 8 is particularly relevant; it empowers MONUC, within specific circumstances, to act under Chapter VII of the Charter to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.

Similarly, we would like to mention two topics of particular concern. First of all, the reports about human rights violations and non-respect of international humanitarian law, which, according to the most recent report of the Secretary-General and later information, are

particularly serious in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. We feel that these crimes cannot remain unpunished. It is indispensable that an international inquiry be held to bring those responsible to justice. Secondly, we are concerned by the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo. We consider that there is a link between these illicit activities and the prolongation of the armed conflict. We believe that these activities must cease immediately. We support the carrying-out of an objective investigation by a panel of experts, and we await the Secretary-General's report, as called for in the resolution.

Finally, we would like to state that, as a way of reaffirming its commitment to the Lusaka Process and a peaceful and negotiated resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Argentine Republic will make a contribution to the funding of the activities of the Joint Military Commission and the tasks of Sir Ketumile Masire as facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Council has concluded its consideration of the draft resolution.

The representative of the Democratic Republic of Congo has asked to speak and I invite him to make a statement.

Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): The Security Council has unanimously adopted the resolution on the second phase of the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

My delegation is all the more gratified that this decision, which is a significant step towards achieving peace, has been taken under the presidency of the representative of a friendly country, Argentina, with which my country has entertained long-standing and excellent relations marked by the seal of reciprocal trust and appreciation. My country has not forgotten that it was Argentina, along with other members of the Security Council, that in 1960 adopted resolution 145 (1960), acting on the Congolese Government's request for assistance from the United Nations in order to confront the aggression of which it was already an innocent victim, and in this manner made it possible to preserve the integrity of the young republic that had just attained national independence and sovereignty on 30 June of that year. The Security Council had launched an appeal at the time to all States to abstain from any activity that could undermine the political independence of the country. That appeal was to be renewed on several occasions over time by the Council as well as by the General Assembly.

Allow me, at this stage, to pay tribute jointly to two Presidents of the General Assembly: the first, the late Mongi Slim of Tunisia, who on 13 July 1960 introduced in the Council the draft resolution to create the United Nations Operation in the Congo, better known as ONUC. The second is Theo-Ben Gurirab of Namibia, who has unceasingly reminded you of the deplorable situation and unspeakable suffering of the Congolese population as a result of the shameless aggression against my country by the armed forces of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. May those two illustrious sons of Africa and their respective countries, Tunisia and Namibia, accept this expression of profound gratitude from the Government and people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The fact that the Council is meeting today to help my country once again seems to us a well-deserved victory of those illustrious statesmen. It is their victory, and the fact that the Council is examining a situation of aggression that has been noted and recognized by the entire world is also their victory.

Through these two personalities, these two worthy sons of Africa, now independent, my delegation would like to thank very sincerely all the members of the Security Council present here and all the representatives of the African States who have served on the Council since 1998. My delegation also wishes to extend its thanks to the member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which consistently and strongly pressured the United Nations to find a solution to this war of aggression and for the Security Council to forego its timorous approach to the aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo which has been occurring since 2 August 1998.

How could I fail to remind you that on 2 August 1990, confronting a similar situation in a State victim of aggression in another region of the world, the Council had raised an entire army to combat that instance of aggression.

My delegation must nevertheless welcome this awakening of the Security Council concerning this

situation which is now almost two years old — this breach of peace and security, this violation of the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of a Member State of the United Nations by other Members of this universal organization.

Allow me also, Mr. President, to avail myself of this opportunity to salute your predecessor, the representative of the United States, who during his presidency in January took the courageous initiative of inviting our African heads of State to participate in the special meeting of the Security Council on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His skilful and masterly approach and his vision enabled the representative of the United States to achieve considerable progress in the search for a lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region.

My delegation would also like to pay well-deserved tribute to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the remarkable efforts he has constantly made to bring about an end to the aggression and for his numerous and laudable initiatives in favour of truth, peace and security in the region.

My delegation is gratified to see that after so much equivocation, the Security Council has finally heard the cries and lamentations of the Congolese people, who, from the heights of Mount Ruwenzori to the plains of Kinshasa, from the equatorial basin to the savannahs of Katanga, are suffering the tortures of the damned. It has heard the cries of thousands of orphaned children, and haunting laments arising from the graves of those women buried alive, or from those mothers whose entrails were spilled on the ground because they were suspected of bearing in their womb a potential perpetrator of genocide.

My delegation believes that it is incumbent upon you, members of the Council, to shoulder your responsibilities, to condemn energetically these massacres of innocent victims so that the entire world may say: never again!

From this very table, on 24 January, you heard Mr. Laurent-Désiré Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, assure you that the Congolese Government will spare no effort in order to restore the Congolese people to its status as primary sovereign and as the unique source of legitimacy. The head of the Congolese State had come to share with you his intention to accept the holding of an inter-Congolese dialogue, whose objectives are no different from those of the national debate already convened by the Congolese Government and which is designed to define the rules of the game that will govern the exercise of power and thus lay the basis for a new and democratic political order, of which the Congolese people have so long been deprived.

His Excellency President Laurent Kabila, who on that occasion extended his hand to those who were once allies but are now enemies, also called on the international community to persuade the aggressors against the Democratic Republic of the Congo that they had to make similar efforts to bring peace to their own countries.

Members will understand that my country cannot fail vigorously to support the proposal made by the Secretary-General and by the Organization of African Unity and echoed by France regarding the convening of an international conference on the Great Lakes region to tackle difficult common problems in the region and to consider the requirements for lasting peace and development throughout the region, with a view to the permanent elimination of both the distant and the more immediate causes of the disaster that has cast a shadow over our continent.

My delegation is therefore gratified by the adoption of today's resolution expanding the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in the context of the second phase of its deployment. We regret, however, that members of the Council did not strive to spare the Democratic Republic of the Congo further humiliation with grave consequences, lacking the courage to completely dissociate the issues relating to two hostile countries, one of which has clearly caused its own misfortunes as well as those of its neighbour: my own country.

My delegation sincerely thanks the Administration and the Congress of the United States for having spared no effort in providing material support for MONUC. We are grateful too for the sincere cooperation we have enjoyed from the United Nations, through its Department of Peacekeeping Operations. But my delegation is duty-bound to observe that the United Nations operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo would have been less costly had the United Nations acted on the many requests made to the Council by the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the outbreak of aggression in August 1998.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is now curious to see how much the present operation will cost. It was the Council's hesitation that led to the current situation. Had the Council been in a position to respond

to my country's complaints since the fateful month of August 1998, it would not now be mourning the dead, regretting violations of the Lusaka Agreement and much else besides.

My delegation assures the Council that the Democratic Republic of the Congo will have a warm welcome for MONUC. It will greet those sons and daughters of countries that cherish peace and justice with legendary African hospitality, as only the Congolese can offer it.

For the deployment of MONUC to be a complete success, it will have to be carried out in close cooperation with the authorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My country would wish to be consulted at all times about the way in which the operation is set up; in that connection, it is possible that the Democratic Republic of the Congo will refuse offers by some States whose dealings with the aggressors make it impossible for them to be truly neutral.

My delegation wants to remind the Council of its primary Charter responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We call on the Council to act in full knowledge of the facts, for the greater benefit of the Congolese people. My delegation has not the slightest doubt that the Congolese people will be thankful for this and will be in a position to express their deep gratitude.

Echoing what His Excellency President Laurent Kabila affirmed to the Council last month, my delegation reiterates the readiness of the Congolese Government openly and seriously to discuss ways and means to put an end to this futile, bloody and tragic war, so that we will be able together to build a region in which its peoples can live in peace and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the kind words he addressed to me and for his generous comments about my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Liechtenstein and Norway, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The decision to expand the force to more than 5,500 personnel, including 500 military observers, is highly appropriate and is a clear sign of the international community's commitment to peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The European Union believes that the decision made here today can achieve its aims only if there is unequivocal political will on the part of all involved and strict adherence by all parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Clear progress must be made in establishing an effective framework for the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, which remains the most viable basis for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Indeed, the successful continuation of the peace process depends on the willingness of the parties to place the interests of the Congolese people above any other interests.

In this context, the European Union considers it to be of the utmost importance that all parties cooperate with and facilitate the deployment of MONUC to all designated areas and assure the security and freedom of movement necessary for the full accomplishment of its mandated tasks. This is essential for the success of MONUC and will be instrumental in ensuring the observance of the ceasefire.

The European Union welcomes the establishment of an effective joint structure of MONUC and the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and reaffirms its intention to support its work.

The European Union considers that a peaceful and voluntary process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the militia and other groups currently operating in the region constitutes a key factor in the process and a crucial element for the restoration of peace. In this regard, the European Union considers it essential that United Nations Member States take all the necessary measures to curb all sale or supply of arms and other military equipment to armed groups operating in the conflict. In this context, the European Union recalls its declaration of June 1999 on the arms trade to and within the Great Lakes region.

The European Union further reiterates its call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is another key element of the Lusaka Agreement, which the European Union strongly hopes to see fully implemented.

The European Union considers that an urgent national dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with the provisions of the Lusaka Agreement is essential to ensure the success of national reconciliation. As we have stated on many other occasions, the European Union stands ready to give its support in that framework, and reaffirms that funding is available to assist any credible political dialogue if parties show their readiness and seriousness concerning the process.

The European Union considers the work of Sir Ketumile Masire as an element that is fundamental to the peace process and, in that context, reaffirms its support for all his efforts and initiatives as facilitator and stands ready to assist him in fulfilling his mandate.

The European Union remains deeply concerned by the continuing reports of human rights violations caused by the delays in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, widespread ceasefire violations and the continuation of the conflict. Recent reports regarding the outbreak of fighting between the Lendu and Hema tribes in the Ituri region of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo — fighting which has resulted in the killing of many people and major violations of human rights — deepens our concern and stresses the dramatic nature of the situation and how the hostilities have caused immense human suffering to civilians, in particular women and children. The continuing practice of recruiting child soldiers, reported to be taking place especially in the east of the country, is particularly serious and unacceptable. This situation demands immediate action.

The European Union reaffirms the importance it attaches to the respect for human rights and international humanitarian law and stresses the need to ensure unhindered access by humanitarian organizations to all areas where the population is in need. The security of its personnel also needs to be assured.

The European Union reaffirms its support — in the context of a lasting solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — for the idea of an international conference to address the underlying causes of conflict and the related issues concerning the stability of the Great Lakes region. The organization of such an initiative, as soon as the key elements of the Lusaka Agreement have been implemented, could contribute to the achievement of security, structural stability and sustainable development.

Last month, all the regional leaders who came to New York to address this Council on the Democratic Republic of Congo reaffirmed their commitment to finding a peaceful and negotiated solution to the conflict and asked that the international community, through the United Nations, provide assistance. The United Nations reacted rapidly by showing its readiness to assist and to reinforce its commitment to this process. This Council is today following up on that commitment.

The European Union is convinced that the extension and expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo provides a unique opportunity for all the parties involved to restore peace and stability to that battered country and help give back to the Congolese people and all affected in the region the means to achieve a democratic environment and national reconciliation.

The European Union reiterates that the success of MONUC hinges on the political will of the parties to fulfil the obligations they accepted under the Lusaka Agreement. We therefore strongly hope that today's signal of international support for the peace process will be an additional incentive for the parties concerned to create the conditions for peace, leading to the holding of free and fair elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is, we believe, the only path towards long and lasting national reconciliation. Furthermore, the European Union calls upon the Democratic Republic of the Congo to enhance the political and civil rights and fundamental freedoms of its people.

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.